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INTRODUCTION

By

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The voyages of discovery in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries closed what has been called the inland sea period and opened the oceanic period of history. In so doing they opened the modern migratory epoch in which we live. Man had always, to be sure, been a migratory animal, but in earlier centuries his migrations moved mainly overland or across land-locked seas. Such were those which invaded the moribund Roman Empire and contributed to its downfall or spread Hebrews, Arabs or Turks over Europe and northern Africa.

The potamic and thalassic periods of history might also be called the time of human divergence. Then the habitat of man, like that of other land animals, was broken into a few areas separated by oceans or by mountain ranges and deserts almost as pathless. Behind these barriers varieties or races of men, as of other terrestrial mammals, gradually developed and within each area minor differences, physical, linguistic or cultural, arose. If one compares a map of the zoo-geographical regions of the earth with one showing the habitat of the main races of mankind he must be struck with their resemblances and will, perhaps, infer therefrom that the conditions affecting the distribution and the divergence of other mammalian families have influenced also those of the one mammalian family *Homo sapiens*.

The oceanic period or modern migratory epoch has been characterized, unlike its predecessors, by changes of residence occurring increasingly and at last predominantly over the water. Oceans had been barriers; gradually they became highways. The early migrants in this period were mainly Europeans; later Africans and Asiatics swelled the ranks. Shall we find one day that a period of physical convergence has succeeded one of divergence?

Man's new power to traverse the oceans almost at will disturbed the previous equilibrium between him and his surroundings and especially between different human groups, and started currents of migration which grew in volume and spread from area to area until

the second decade of the present century. Associated with these migrations was a great and accelerating increase in the population of the earth, most of which was beyond the reach of statistical observation but which probably resulted in quadrupling the earth's population since the middle of the seventeenth century. It was not until the twentieth century that the increase showed any signs of slackening.

At first these migrations aroused little observation and no measurement, but with their growing importance and with the greater extent, population, wealth and organization of the states from which they sallied forth or to which they removed, public records of these currents were established and improved. The greatest source of these migratory currents was Europe and today one-eleventh of the earth's population consists of Europeans by blood who are living outside of that continent. There are between one and a half and two times as many such European folk living elsewhere as there were living in Europe in the seventeenth century. From these currents of migration within the oceanic period swarming into and multiplying in a sparsely settled region of surpassing natural resources the United States has arisen as the one full-grown child of Europe. Of all the Europeans now living elsewhere three-fifths are in the United States. The aim of the Editor's two chapters is first to measure, as well as present knowledge permits, the growth of the earth's population during this great migratory epoch which is now, perhaps, drawing toward its close, and secondly to interpret the available statistics regarding the greatest single current, that which has set toward the shores of the United States. The attempt has been made in all the chapters to exclude controversial matter but an examination of them may leave in the mind of the reader, as it has in the mind of the Editor, a deeper realization that the subject is not one solely of domestic concern but has great and growing international aspects and implication.